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Jack Anderson's Washington Letter
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* * * *EXCERPTED*

RUMORS: TRUE OR FALSE?

Nazi hunters have made little progress so far in their search for Dr. Josef Mengele. TRUE.

The "Angel of Death," who sent hundreds of thousands of Jews to the gas chambers at Auschwitz, is now the object of an intensive international search. Three governments -- the United States, West Germany and Israel -- are hot on his trail. Rewards totalling \$4 million have been put on his head. In this country, the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations, Drug Enforcement Administration and U.S. Marshals Service have been assigned to the case. The Pentagon and the CIA have also been ordered to cooperate.

Yet the search is foundering; officials of the three governments have accused each other of withholding information and hampering the investigation.

The U.S. effort is also in disarray. Only the Office of Special Investigations is pushing the investigation. The U.S. Marshals seem unwilling to spend any of their own money on the search. The CIA is holding back until it gets orders from an indifferent Director William Casey. And the Pentagon appears to be interested only in clearing its skirts; the Army is busily preparing a report disputing an earlier document that Mengele had been spotted and arrested in the U.S. zone at the end of World War II.

An impatient Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, R-N.Y., has fired off private letters to the White House and CIA urging better cooperation. Meanwhile, the arch-criminal remains as elusive as he has been for 40 years.

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